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Damage Assessed in Navy Case

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The Defense Department began assessing damage from its latest espionage case yesterday in a task complicated by suggestions that a Navy antiterrorist analyst arrested Thursday may have overstated his alleged involvement with foreign agents.

Jonathan J. Pollard, 31, a Naval Investigative Service employe, was arrested and charged with providing secret documents to a foreign government after he apparently sought refuge in the Israeli Embassy Thursday morning.

Last night, the case widened when the FBI announced the arrest of Pollard's wife, Anne L. Henderson-Pollard, 25. She was arrested at the D.C. Jail while visiting her husband and was charged with "the unauthorized possession of classified documents relating to the national defense of the United States," the FBI said.

Henderson-Pollard's arrest came after the FBI searched the woman's purse, which was seized by agents on Thursday, and the couple's Dupont Circle apartment.

She was being held pending a bond hearing today in D.C. Superior Court.

Officials close to the investigation said Thursday that Jonathan Pollard claimed to have given papers to the Israelis.

But administration officials said yesterday that Pollard also said he had provided documents to East Germany, a claim now believed false.

In addition, officials said Pollard was questioned and released earlier in the week when he promised to lead FBI agents to alleged accomplices, including one man believed to be closer to Pakistan and the Arab world than to Israel.

The Israeli government said it had no knowledge of Pollard yesterday, and one ranking U.S. official said "the Israeli connection remains unclear."

But two sources familiar with the investigation said evidence, still inconclusive but independent of Pollard's statements, links him to Israel.

Pollard was arrested before the investigation could jell because, instead of leading investigators to his alleged contacts, he unexpectedly swerved his car into the Israeli Embassy compound in upper Northwest Washington Thursday. Embassy officials led him out and he was arrested. "They had to move in," one official said, because investigators believed that Pollard might be trying to flee the country.

Pollard's wife was with him when he drove his 1980 Mustang into the compound. Last night, the FBI declined to elaborate on what other role she may have played.

Amid the confusion over who, if anyone, benefited from Pollard's alleged removal of documents, U.S. officials said they remain convinced that he has been collecting secret papers and improperly tapping into Navy computers for about a year and a half.

His arrest, on the heels of recent Navy spy scandals involving the family of John A. Walker Jr., prompted renewed criticism of Pentagon counterespionage.

"This treacherous and traitorous act by a trusted employe motivated simply by money is appalling," the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence said in a statement released by Chairman David F. Durenberger (R-Minn.). "It once again reinforces the need for immediate action on the numerous proposals for improvement in counterintelligence that are under consideration in the administration and before our committee," it said.

Defense Department spokesman Robert B. Sims said heightened sensitivity about counterespionage arising from the Walker case probably led to Pollard's arrest. Other Pentagon sources said fellow employes tipped investigators several weeks ago that Pollard was seeking and copying more documents than his job apparently required.

Sims also said that, had measures recommended by a Pentagon counterespionage panel Thursday been in place, Pollard "probably would have been caught sooner, or it never would have happened." Those measures include more searches of briefcases and polygraph tests.

Since June 1984, Pollard has worked in the NIS terrorism alert center, established after the bombing of the Marine headquarters in Beirut in October 1983.

The center is supposed to sift data from many intelligence sources and tell leaders and commanders in the field which reports seem to presage actual threats.

Defense Department officials said that, in his job, Pollard probably did not have access to secret codes or other communications information, such as that sold by the Walkers to the Soviets. However, he had a secret clearance and could have gleaned much about U.S. intelligence sources and capabilities, the Pentagon officials said.

In addition, Pollard may have learned sensitive information outside his scope of work because he had access to the Navy computer in Suitland, where elements of the Naval Intelligence Command and the NIS have headquarters. "We just don't know yet what we lost," one official said, adding that investigators are trying urgently to collect documents that Pollard may have taken from his office.

The Navy initially believed that Pollard was collecting documents for his own use, administration officials said. But, confronted early this week, the analyst claimed numerous contacts with foreign agents. "He made a lot of wild claims; that's just the type of personality he has," one official said.

Nonetheless, some officials said Israel remains the chief suspect as buyer of documents. "Right now, some people are inclined to accept what he's saying [about Israel] until proven otherwise," one official said, "but there's a lot of work yet to be done."

Israeli officials in Jerusalem, as in the embassy here, said they had no knowledge of Pollard, Washington Post correspondent William Claiborne reported. "We don't have the slightest idea about this matter," Foreign Ministry spokesman Avi Pazner said. "We are checking that story, and after we find out what the facts are, then and only then will there be an official reaction."

Staff writer John M. Goshko contributed to this article.

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